The COMMONWEAL

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Bear-Lion-Eagle

THE RESULTS of the Molotoff-Churchill-Roosevelt negotiations unquestionably represent a diplomatic victory for the United Nations as well as the promise of an offensive military campaign on the European continent. Nor are they barren of hope for the future settlement which must be worked out before peace is possible. Yet it is well worth noting that the question of Russia's post-war frontiers, which we have discussed at length in our last two issues, undoubtedly was the most vexatious of all those on the carpet. And Russian demands were undoubtedly adamant. The treaty as published does little more in this regard than to find an equivocal formula which permits the frontier Russia wants and at the same time does not say so in as many words. It should be remembered that as late as early June—almost ten days *after* the signing of the treaty—a dispatch from Moscow categorically stated: "For the Soviet Union, the situation of the Baltic republics after victory is outside of discussion."

In the treaty itself it is affirmed that both contracting parties wish to collaborate on the basis of the Atlantic Charter, and that "they will take into account the interests of the United Nations . . . and they will act in accordance with the two principles of not seeking territorial aggrandizement for themselves and of non-interference in the internal affairs of other states." It should be noted that none of the countries which would be affected by a westward rectification of Soviet frontiers is one of the United Nations excepting Poland, and, even more to the point, that no date is set as that on which "existing" frontiers shall be considered as the basis of post-war frontiers. Under the treaty it would be quite legitimate for both Russia and England to take June, 1941, as the date on which Russian frontiers were "frozen." This would mean that the fate of the Baltic States is already considered as settled and "outside of discussion," because at the time of Russia's entrance into the war she was in possession of them. The great majority of American columnists and commentators have pretended that the treaty ruled this out. It is only honest to say that their pretension has no basis. Of course the future can hold events beyond our reckoning, and the equivocal language of the treaty can be taken in both ways. The great thing is for Americans to realize what has and has not been said, and thus avert bitter surprises tending to push us back into tragic isolationism.

Each One of Ourselves

IT IS the mark of decisively fine thought that it raises, in reader or hearer, perhaps as many new questions as it settles old ones. To open up a road is to show its further reaches, vanishing in a remoter point of obscurity; to give a light is to reveal what more extended portions of the truth remain to be explored. It is to be expected that such an outstanding analysis as Father Couturier's "Ghandi and Ourselves" (THE COMMONWEAL, June 19) will incite contemplations and conclusions in line with his, but on one side or the other, as it were, of what he had time and space to say. Certainly few will deny that those are deep-lying truths which Father Couturier recites in unison with the Hindu leader: that the efforts of force in history constantly jeopardize that very spiritual good they assume to protect; that the efforts of the soul alone build lastingly. But every Christian must search into the question of how these truths apply to his own individual conscience and will: that is the mark of Christianity—and while we profess no specialist knowledge of Hindu beliefs, we set down here the pronounced impression that those beliefs do not comparably stress the personal decision.

Leaving that aside, however—leaving Ghandi aside, and considering only each one of ourselves—there is, to repeat, the question, What is Christian pacifism? It is not the mere fastidiousness that is willing to draw aside from a harsh and bloody duty. It is not the cowardice that masks itself as meekness. Nor is it the calculation that has discovered in the appearance of humility an effective and powerful technique of assertiveness. It is, and is only, the love of Christ,

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self-immolated for love of us, that makes us refrain from injuring even an active enemy, since he is sealed to us in brotherhood by the Sacred Blood. But as this motive is the highest possible motive that can actuate a soul, a motive that not only opens the treasuries of heaven but produces effects strong beyond calculation upon human society—so, too, it is a motive which can only be wielded by the true and prepared warrior. It is a matter of special personal vocation: and, in passing, it is one of the incidental marks of that vocation that the one so called does not despise the common soldier, fighting in the ranks of mere justice, his material bayonet in his hand and his veritable physical life at stake. But it behooves the Christian thinking of these things to realize how easily the mere externals of pacifism can be counterfeited, and to search his heart accordingly. The strongest clue to the need for caution is indeed found in the caution of the Church. She knows that, as he who fights in the physical battle may be not only a hero but a saint, he who does not fight in the physical battle must have at least as much goodness and bravery: the pacifist must be at least as good as the soldier. She thinks with the mind of Christ, Who, blessing meekness, did not say, Blessed are they that are meek in order to possess the land. She knows that, though the true Christian virtues are the strongest things in the universe, the affectation of them is a deadly poison to the soul. It is her own word that the corruption of the best is the worst.

Lidice

WHEN, in the period between the two wars, the Germans appealed war time charges of atrocities which had been made against them, and when men in Britain and in France and in the United States conscientiously rectified all that was excessive or false in those charges, there grew strong in the minds of all of us the determination never again to be placed in the position of having to disbelieve what we believed, retract what we charged against any future enemy in any future war. Of this determination there is indirect evidence in the fact that the propaganda services, before and after our entry into the war, have presented atrocity stories with comparative reluctance and only when compelled to do so by the presence of atrocious fact—direct evidence in that it took overwhelming proof before the public would accept the atrocious nature of German action in Poland, in Czechoslovakia and in the matter of hostages.

Evidently the Germans, too, prefer that in this war there should be no possible uncertainty, no unfounded charges, no post-war debate. To evidence presented by the Vatican radio as to their action in Poland, the rulers of Germany reply that their policy is deliberate and necessary, that the rigor of their punitive action is to be measured only by the degree of resistance to their rule. It is they who list the hostages they kill, they who proclaim their resort to terror, they who now announce the fate of Lidice. It is they, not we, who state that all the men of that Bohemian village were shot, all the women removed to captivity, all the children abducted—the village leveled.

We write this paragraph not to arouse hatred of the Germans, but because it is our duty to face the facts. It is not by refusing to face the facts that we can keep hatred out of this war. There is the fact Lidice. And that fact, and the German insistence that it will not remain an isolated fact, brings up a compelling and extremely difficult problem of justice. In bitter fact it brings before public opinion and the responsible governments of the United Nations the problem as to how to prevent the repetition of the crime committed at Lidice. Our conscience will not accept reprisals in kind. But neither will our conscience lightly accept any evasion of responsibility. We are living now in the plane of force, the just war we fight is being waged with force, the crime of Lidice is a crime of force. Our reply must be legitimate but it must be forceful. What calm threat in justice and in force, what deliberate action that is strong and just, can we find now and employ to halt this odious acceleration of horror?

Responsibility Comes With Age

SEVERAL times and recently we have had occasion to enquire as to the future of American labor and what appear to be the absorbing personal preoccupations and ambitions of certain labor leaders. John L. Lewis's current drive to build up the United Mine Workers into a third major labor group is sure to focus public attention on internal labor politics. This struggle for power is important, and the motives behind it are more important still, yet to look always at this aspect of the labor scene is to miss certain basic factors potentially, at least, of far greater moment.

Since the United States entered the war mention has been made from time to time of the industrial council plan of Walter Reuther and Philip Murray of the United Automobile Workers and the United Steelworkers of America respectively. Yet there are few indications that this industrially-democratic war production plan has received the consideration it deserves. Even more specific is the scheme of calling an employer-employee conference to pool manufacturing facilities for war production proposed by David Dubinsky and approved by the International Ladies Garment Workers Union convention. The fact that back of this suggestion is the need for providing jobs for 70,000 unemployed garment workers makes it none the less significant. It points to one of the most hopeful possibilities for America's post-war

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economy: gradual assumption by labor of a commensurate share in the management of industry.

The ILGWU is, in fact, one outstanding example of mature unionism. It bargains collectively with some 45 trade associations or employers' groups. Its treasury is in a most healthy state partly due to the fact that during the past 10 years it has called no general strikes yet secured a 30 per cent wage increase as well as considerable curtailment of the work week. At the same time annual expenditures for vacations, sickness and death benefits, for educational and recreational purposes and for charitable donations have been considerable. And while it was achieving all these advantages for the workers (now 90 per cent organized), it has played a large part in building up the garment industry itself.

Today the unions can accomplish most by collaborating as principals in the gigantic task of war production. As representatives of labor play an increasingly important rôle in various production councils, they will gain the experience and respect that should lead to a due share in management of post-war enterprise. Organized labor has grown numerically five-fold in the past 10 years. Many unions are still in the pioneer stage. Accordingly we should not allow personal and organizational struggles for power to blind us to labor's growing sense and status of responsibility.

Liberty Is Liberty

THE decisions of the Supreme Court with regard to the Gobitis case (two years ago) and the recent case covering the requirement of commercial licenses for distributors of leaflets both seem to us to be in a dangerously wrong direction. In both cases the losing parties were members of that peculiar sect generally known as Jehovah's Witnesses. Certainly it is difficult to conceive of having any sympathy for the views of these religious fanatics. If their beliefs were to gain widespread acceptance, they might offer a serious problem as undermining the authority of our government, quite apart from the religious hatred and intolerance which they promote. But the fact remains that the peaceable expression of the Witnesses' views is a right guaranteed them under our Constitution, and it is a right which protects every publisher of a religious paper in this country. There is nothing in principle to prevent the extension of the licensing powers sustained by the Supreme Court against THE COMMONWEAL or *The Christian Century* or the *Menorah Journal* or *Our Sunday Visitor*—or any other publication adhering to a creed. There is only one ray of hope in this decision. In the Gobitis case the court was divided 8-1, in the present case it was divided 5-4, with the Chief Justice, Justices Black, Douglas and Murphy in dissent, and with the latter three publicly recanting their former stand.

Citadel of Democracy

HER nationality was Americanized European: impossible to be more specific because she applauded with equal gusto the flags of Greece, Russia, Free France, Yugoslavia, Poland, Lithuania, Belgium, Norway, Holland, Finland. To see over the heads that solidly jammed four miles of Fifth Avenue, she had mounted an orange-crate retrieved from a nearby alley. A policeman invited her to step down; safety regulations proscribed obstructions on the sidewalk. She didn't wait for him to be out of hearing: "You dirty Irish mick."

Of all the incidents of last Saturday's "New York at War" parade, that one remains most insidiously in our memory.

Half a million men, women, children of every race and color marching for eleven hours under a broiling sun to give testimony of their solidarity in the cause of democracy, and of their faith in the US as the depository and champion of their cause; five times that number along the curbs echoing their solidarity and faith.

And then a cop does his duty, and democracy flies out the window. Nationalism takes over.

Two weeks ago we suggested a measure of realism in facing post-war territorial problems, and a flood of reproachful letters resulted. How could any responsible democrat ignore his sacred obligation to restore every last dispossessed and persecuted nationality?

Is it our sacred obligation to supply the precipitating conditions for the next war? To dissolve the united democratic nations' dearly-won solidarity into self-seeking nationalistic squabbles? Which are we fighting for: the emotion that swelled our anonymous neighbor's breast when the massed flags swept by, or the emotion that twisted her mouth when a public servant suggested that she suit her behavior to the joint convenience and safety of two and a half millions of her fellow democrats?

N.B.

ON June 17, 18,000 people—mostly Negroes—assembled in New York's Madison Square Garden to launch a movement for Negro rights. The chairman of the meeting was Mr. Lawrence M. Ervin. Said the New York *Times* in its account of the proceedings: "Most of the speakers on the long program stressed the point that while the democracies might be able to win the war without the help of the Negro, they could not win the peace unless there were complete equality of opportunity and privilege for all races. The Rev. John La Farge, associate editor of *America*, Roman Catholic publication, was introduced by Mr. Ervin as 'the only white man who had consented to speak at the meeting.'"

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Defense Housing

By BARRY BYRNE

IMPORTANT and far reaching effects may be expected from the consolidation of all federal housing agencies, under the Presidential Executive Order of February 24, 1942. While this move was necessitated by the great need of adequate housing for war workers, the establishment of the National Housing Agency, with Mr. John B. Blandford, Jr., as Administrator of this consolidated group, promises to be a permanent improvement. It also promises to eliminate the lost motion that characterizes the work of government bureaus with parallel, or over-lapping, functions. Within this National Housing Agency are three units which function as coordinated parts of the controlling Agency. These are (1) the Federal Housing Administration (FHA) which promotes private enterprise in the field of defense housing, (2) the Federal Home Loan Bank Administration (FHLBA) which cooperates in the financing of such private ventures, (3) the Federal Public Housing Authority (FPHA) which utilizes federal funds directly to construct housing for war workers. As the activities of the FPHA are the particular subject of this article, it is to be noted that it is designed to work in collaboration with local housing authorities, as far as possible. A further consolidation has been effected within these three main subdivisions. The FPHA, as an instance, has taken over the housing functions of the US Housing Authority, the Defense Homes Corporation, the Farm Security Administration (except farm housing), Division of Defense Housing of the Federal Works Agency, Public Building Administration and War and Navy Department (except on reservations).

While the operation of the FHA and private effort in this field of war housing has importance, the paralyzing effect of inadequate housing in defense districts makes the direct action of the Federal Public Housing Authority of paramount importance. Release No. 671, issued by the FPHA, and dated May 4, 1942, is very reassuring in its summary of the activities of this bureau under the direction of the Commissioner, Mr. Herbert Emmerich. In this report we find that 175 pre-war slum clearance public housing projects have been transferred to the exclusive use of war workers. These house 45,499 families. In addition to these converted projects the Federal Government operating through the FPHA has completed 103,254 houses, and 56,660 are now under construction. There are also 125,691 units that are in the planning stage, preparatory to construction.

It is true that the immensity of the field to be covered makes this only a drop in the bucket, but, considering the many aspects of war work that demand attention, and the suddenness of the emergency, this seems a very good start. That it is only the beginning must be understood and it is of first importance to the morale of war workers that they be decently housed. A tremendous dislocation of workers, attracted to new localities by war industry, has produced an acute and troublesome problem. The study of the housing situation and the effect of this influx of "in-migrants" to the Detroit district, published in the April, 1942, issue of the *Architectural Forum*, gives a picture of the critical situation in that industrial center. According to the estimate of the Chamber of Commerce, housing must be arranged for 68,000 new workers. The Mayor's Committee, acting under its chairman, Father Raymond Clancy, places the number of in-migrants at 190,000. The latter is probably more realistic as it was undoubtedly prepared without reference to the preservation of speculative real estate values and rents—a factor which probably influenced the estimate of the Chamber officials.

What this demands of a community, and of community facilities such as schools and churches, can be appreciated. Housing alone, vital as it is, will not solve all aspects of this problem, and this need is paralleled by the necessity of adequate school buildings. For the Church, dedicated as it is to the cure of souls, there is also the problem of supplying church facilities to care for the needs of Catholics involved in this great migration, and of parochial schools, or places for purely religious training, to carry on this essential work. The time honored method usual in the relatively slow growth of new parishes, which permits the pastor to match this growth with adequate buildings, will scarcely fit this phenomenal situation. It is one that is unique, both in its demands and possibilities, and would seem to require a centrally controlled solution, one that has been carefully evolved out of a study of all the factors, including that of a partial exodus.

Where sufficient housing did not exist in communities, the Government has met the situation by establishing colonies of trailers. These are in the nature of a stop-gap to care for the housing shortage until more permanent houses can be built. These houses that have supplanted these Bedouin-like forms of shelter have been of two general kinds, one of which is a de-mountable, removable type and the other is of a fixed, permanent character. There has been a consistent effort to avoid the possibility of creating ghost towns, for the after-war period. This has led to the use of these de-mountable houses which can readily be moved to other localities. While they are called temporary, they are reasonably substantial and are complete in their equipment. Being of prefabricated construction, the parts are manufactured

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either in a plant in another locality or in a temporary factory located on the site itself.

These de-mountable houses are of simple construction and of a generally garage-like appearance. They are what one would call "neat," but they have no other apparent virtue than that of utility to recommend them. The structure consists of pre-fabricated panels of large but transportable size, joined at their meeting junction with bolts, or locks. While needlessly unimaginative and barren in design, the living accommodations seem adequate and consist of a living room, complete kitchen and bath room, and from one to three bed rooms, as the size of the unit permits. Of a similar construction and also for temporary use are the de-mountable dormitories for single war workers. These dormitories shelter about sixty persons in single and double furnished rooms. Each unit contains a lounge, toilet and bath room section and separate heating plant. The weekly room rent is moderate, $3.50 to $5.00 per person in a double room and $5.00 to $7.00 for a single room.

In areas where the need for additional housing preceded the war, and where such housing may be expected to fill an after-war need, a permanent (as contrasted to a de-mountable) type of house is being erected. These permanent homes rent from $25.00 to $40.00 a month, exclusive of public utility payments for water, gas and electricity. The houses are either of the prefabricated form or of the older, piecemeal type of assemblage. It is significant, however, that increasing emphasis is being given to the economy and construction speed of the prefabricated type. This may have an extraordinary, even revolutionary, effect on small house design after the emergency.

It is the Government's purpose to make these permanent houses a part of the public low rent housing program, to provide homes for low income families, such as were previously housed in slums. Supplementing this intention is the purpose to sell to individual owners and, as stated in the Lanham Act, "as expeditiously as possible." There has also been some progress made in the formation of mutual home ownership companies for co-operative ownership and management, along the lines of mutual insurance plans successfully operating in Europe. Under this arrangement the worker would have an opportunity to purchase an equity in his home without a down payment.

The encouraging aspect of all of this housing effort is the manner in which an aim of ultimate and lasting social good is being preserved and developed. It is an aim that was implied in the address of the Administrator, Mr. John B. Blandford, Jr., at the opening of the current exhibition of defense housing at the Museum of Modern Art. Being a long range view it is also one that needs no defense or justification to persons having the general, communal good at heart. That it will encounter obstructive opposition from entrenched real estate interests may be expected. The dominance of the housing field by this group, and by allied financial institutions, is seriously threatened and there will, undoubtedly, be a desperate effort made to retain some vestiges of their control and the preservation of fictitious real estate values.

What may be termed the "by-products" of a war can have an effect both for evil and good. The difference in the result, as regards the desired good, is largely determined by constructive utilization of conditions precipitated by a war. There are, moreover, inevitable or natural results that are more specifically in the nature of social assets. Anyone recalling the beneficial developments in surgery and medication that a war promotes will realize that herein is some of the good that companions a definite evil. The Crimean War, Florence Nightingale and the whole institution of modern nursing is one example of this valid progress. At present other possibilities exist in the mechanized, industrial field. Technical development is cumulative in its nature. By repetition of effort, not only are better mechanical forms and processes achieved, but new processes emerge. The possibilities in the industrial field, therefore, become startling in the extreme. We sincerely hope a better world will exist after the war; regardless of this, however, we may reasonably expect a world in which the churches in which we worship, the equipment we use and the houses in which we live will have a new and different character.

The prefabricated house is a case in point. While the feasibility of mass production of houses has had a great deal of attention and publicity in the last decade, relatively little was accomplished that was of demonstrable value. As time passed we witnessed what amounted to an abandonment of the idea by many manufacturers and by the buying public. As produced the houses were unattractive and not at all economical in cost. The present emergency promises to change all that, and we now see the discredited prefabricated house coming into its own. Its emergence in a usable, livable form will probably be one of the by-products of this war. As it is now being used, it is still the unwieldy, characterless-looking object it has always been. It can be hoped, however, that time will change that. The improvement and mastery of the untouched resources of the process will come out of the repetition of effort and the creative ideas this will release. We may hope, therefore, for a new form of dwelling, fresh and livable in character and last, but not least, cheap enough to buy and own. Its advent will also be the signal for the decline of the ubiquitous investment builder and the noxiousness of his fake-picturesque violations of the natural landscape.

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Mr. Bruté Becomes a Bishop

An impractical priest makes up his mind.*

By **Theodore Maynard**

AS SOON as Mr. Bruté saw the letter from Rome he knew what it contained. The seal stamped with the arms of the Cardinal Prefect of Propaganda was enough for that. Now it had come he knew that his pleading had failed; he was to be sent as bishop to the backwoods of the West. There was no need to open it just then; the Sisters at the convent were waiting for him.

He strode down from the college, cutting diagonally by the path through the woods that led to the turnpike road from Frederick. At this early hour the air was cool, but he could feel already that it was going to be another hot Maryland day. In Brittany he remembered many a summer damp with rain or with mists from the sea. Here it was a sticky heat. But the trees overhead kept away the morning sun. He was grateful for that little relief.

His mind was racing with thought, already devising arguments to be used in a possible last desperate effort to avoid the appointment that had been made. And he was in a hurry to get to the convent. Even so, he found a moment to peer into a grotto he had built only yesterday; he wished to make sure the mortar had set well. Bien! a statue of Our Lady would go there soon. This he took in at a glance, almost without stopping. It was like a bird perching an instant on a bough. He was all the more like a bird because of that great beak of a nose. Then his mind darted off again. The little quick, twitching movement was all his own—the same as his style of speaking or writing, a cascade of sentences, half of them unfinished, twisting off midway from English into French and back again.

A smile spread over his face. It always wore a smile flickering at the corner of the eyes and the wide mouth. But this was a change from the smile of mild benignity to the smile of mild amusement. He had thought of how people would look at one another wondering how on earth his name had ever been proposed for a bishopric. A dreamy old scholar with his string of strange hobbies was no man to be a bishop in the West. "Poor crazy Bruté"; that was what he had been called. So far from minding it, he used to repeat it from time to time. It set him all the more free for his books. Even here at Mount St. Mary's nobody had ever burdened him with responsibility, though he was the oldest man among them. There were compensations in having a reputation for eccentricity. But evidently there were people even crazier than poor Bruté.

Lean and erect, he covered the ground in long swift strides, a gaunt angularity in threadbare clothes. Perhaps he could spare a moment to stop at the little graveyard before going in. He would pray there for the souls of his dear dead —Harriet and Cecilia and Annina and Bec.

"Elizabeth, pray for Simon," he said as he rose to his feet. She would see to it that he would be saved from a bishopric.

As he did so he recalled with dismay how nearly all of Elizabeth's friends had been made bishops. First there was Cheverus—plain Mr. Cheverus of Boston when she first knew him, but soon afterwards the bishop there and now an archbishop in France. And his own friend Flaget, who had brought him to America, he too was a bishop now, as DuBourg and David, other friends of Mother Seton's, had become bishops. Even Henry Hobart, who had preached at Trinity Church in New York during Elizabeth's Protestant days, was an Episcopalian bishop. Really, it seemed rather dangerous to know her. But of course his case was quite different. The others were capable men. Nobody would understand better than Elizabeth how absurd it was to make him a bishop. She would help him with her prayers.

* * *

It was the feast day of St. Mary Magdalen. For the Epistle at the Mass he said, there was a passage from the Book of Wisdom: "Many waters cannot quench charity, neither can the floods drown it." For the Gospel there was the account of how Mary had washed Christ's feet with her tears. It was all piercing and moving. One sentence especially went through Simon Bruté's heart: "Simon, I have somewhat to say to thee." His voice faltered as he spoke briefly to the Sisters. He could not give them the sermon he had intended. Now it was not for him to speak but to listen.

* This is the Prologue (somewhat shortened) of "The Reed and the Rock: Portrait of Simon Bruté" (first Bishop of Vincennes, Ind., 1834-39), Longmans, $2.75, August.

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At the end of his thanksgiving after Mass, still kneeling on his *prie-dieu* in the sanctuary, he broke the seals of the letter from Rome. The longest of these Latin documents was the Bull creating the diocese of Vincennes. It was dated May 6th. With it came the Bull by which Pope Gregory XVI commended his virtue, learning, piety and prudence, and his zeal for the propagation of the Catholic religion. His name was written in it as that of the bishop chosen. Finally there was a letter of congratulation from Cardinal Pedicini, the Prefect of Propaganda. Here he gazed with astonishment at the words addressing him as Most Illustrious and Right Reverend Lord.

His first impulse was to return the Bulls at once. He noticed with relief that no positive command was laid upon him that he accept this commission. He was therefore free to refuse. All his natural impetuosity suggested this course. But as he knelt before the Blessed Sacrament in prayer he saw that here was a matter that called for thought and more prayer, also for advice. Fortunately the retreat to the Sisters ended that day. He would put all other considerations out of his mind so as to concentrate entirely on breaking the word of life to those quiet souls before him. He could finish the day in Emmitsburg.

* * *

But the next day found him in Baltimore. There the Archbishop, Dr. Whitfield, was as usual noncommittal. He had never seemed to have a definite policy of his own except that of cautiously following in the footsteps of his predecessor Ambrose Maréchal. In any event the Archbishop, whose health was failing, was disinclined to face the problems that would be created for him if another bishop had to be found. All the same, he listened to the protests of the bishop-elect against his own fitness. These struck him as very edifying. Nor could he conceal his veneration of the shy, eager, humble man before him. Simon could get no comfort from that quarter. It was in vain that he marshalled the arguments against himself. The Archbishop merely smiled benignantly and a little wearily. He could take the ground that the matter was out of his hands now. Rome had already sent the Bulls.

There was no recourse except to prayer. So Simon retired into seclusion at the college on Paca Street, where he himself had once been an unwilling president. The students were still away, and the priests who were there understood his wish to be left to silence. For three days he walked the grounds in meditation, or knelt, rapt in adoration, in the beautiful little Gothic chapel, the first of its kind that America had seen.

At first his prayer was only that the threatening dignity might be averted. Then there crept over him the reflection that it might be presumptuous to set his own judgment against that of the bishops of the Council that had sent his name to Rome. Perhaps, he came to think at moments, their wisdom, contrary to all seeming, was greater than his own. Who was he to judge in this case? At last his prayer was simply that he should be directed to make the right decision. With that came peace.

From the beginning there had been in his mind, mingled with dismay, a certain exultation. It was to do missionary work that he had come to America. Instead he had been assigned to teach. From time to time, the old longing had surged up. Once, while at Emmitsburg, he had offered himself for China, another time for Australia, just as his first ambition, years ago in France, had been to go on foot to India and to work there as a medical missionary. Perhaps, he reflected, the quiet life in his little room at Mount St. Mary's was humanly too attractive to him as a scholar. He found a thirst rising in him for something besides books. His ardor and his desire for sacrifice were impelling him to the frontier. But first he must make quite certain that the bishops really did want him. He would lay his doubts again before those most responsible—the bishops in the West. He would abide their decision.

* * *

When he got back to Emmitsburg at the end of the month, he wrote at length to the bishops of St. Louis and Cincinnati and Bardstown. To consult his old colleague at Mount St. Mary's—Dubois at New York—would not be much use. He knew perfectly well what Dubois would say to a man he had always regarded as an eccentric. In any case, conditions in New York were entirely different from those in Indiana. But the bishops of the West would understand his problem. They formed a group by themselves; they were pioneers.

Flaget at Bardstown was of course the best man of all to consult. He was the patriarch of the frontier, and as a priest he had himself worked in Vincennes over forty years ago. And as he was the man who had brought him to America, he might be supposed still to have a direct and personal responsibility.

But there was Dr. Purcell at Cincinnati, who had been his student at Mount St. Mary's, and afterwards, until a year ago, his superior at the college. He might have a clearer view even than Flaget's, for where the older man might think of him as he once was, the young Purcell would think of him as he was now—an ageing, ailing man, full of foibles.

Rosati at St. Louis was also asked for advice. If here personal contacts were slight, Rosati would have been sure to have heard all about him

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from DuBourg and Flaget. The very fact that he was not a particularly close friend might enable him to judge all the more dispassionately. Rosati, as a neighboring bishop, should certainly be asked for his opinion.

* * *

The longest letter of all went to Flaget's recently consecrated coadjutor, Chabrat, who was begged to give his true opinion as though on his deathbed. In it Simon argued that he was too old. But if it be replied that fifty-five was not a great age, and that Flaget was over seventy, he would answer that Flaget was only forty-five when appointed and was still robust, whereas poor Simon was aged beyond his years. And did they know that he had a slight hernia? With that he would be little use on horseback, and it was on horseback that he would have to ride about Indiana. This alone should be a decisive argument.

But then his English was so bad. After all these years in America he still could not preach so that anybody could understand him. People could not understand him very well even when he spoke French—not since he had lost his teeth. And a bishop—especially a missionary bishop—should be able to preach. If they told him that most of the Catholics in Indiana were French—nearly all of them at Vincennes itself—again he had his answer: a bishop must be an apostle. The fields were ripe for harvest. Into Indiana English-speaking Americans were pouring. He was the last man to be their bishop.

There were still other points to stress. He had no talent for administration and had never been allowed to have any voice in the conduct of affairs at Mount St. Mary's, where they realized his incapacity. And he was poor. Never in all his life had he even owned anything except his books and the clothes on his back—and the clothes, such as they were, had never been very securely his. But in Vincennes money would be needed. He had no means of obtaining what was needed to build up a diocese from nothing.

Yet in spite of the case he argued against himself, something else peeped out of the letters; he admitted "a constant reiteration of an impulse . . . I will accept if my friends insist." And again, "Even after the most painful uncertainty there is each time a new peace and impulse *to go*." He would let the western bishops decide whether or not he should go to Vincennes.

It was no new Bruté who came out in these letters. His oddities, his eager incoherence, his selflessness, his crystalline candor—with these they had all long been familiar. It was impossible for him to write a letter that did not reveal himself. Complex as was his mind, spilling over at every moment with its ideas and its learning, his soul was of the utmost simplicity. The modesty they found in him was matter-of-fact. There was no beating of the breast but instead a frank acknowledgment of what he supposed everybody thought of him: "What of exterior mildness, of temper, so vital with regard to ruling and counseling? What is lacking in me is repression of voice, signs of vexation, hastiness in responding, a bad listener,—great faults." The very phrasing was of the kind to bring his image back to them—a man full of something more than vivacity, quivering with excitement, nervously erupting, unable to get to the end of one sentence because he was beginning another, talking with his hands and his thin face over which the skin was drawn as over a skull, talking with his whole body. The letters went off posthaste to the bishops in the West.

* * *

When they had gone Mr. Bruté dismissed the outcome from his mind. But he could not settle down to read, nor could he write. In his room at the college he used to sit late into the night scribbling at top speed to the countless friends whom he so seldom saw—page after page in minute script—never a word erased—with postscripts in the margins and the corners or pasted on. And little drawings. And at the top of every one of them the words "Eternity" and the words "*Auspice Maria.*"

Now that spate of letters suddenly subsided. There was only one thing he could do now, now that the students were away and there were no classes to give. Only one thing, except for his calls upon the sick and the poor. That was his hobby of landscaping. In this he could release his quivering energy. It was the only way he had of calming his nerves. Though age and his hernia had slowed him down somewhat, he still pottered all day about the Mountain, making his grottos and his terraces. Perhaps he would soon have to say goodbye to them. There were some finishing touches he needed to give.

There was, however, another finishing touch of a different kind. The seminarians returned and on August 15th, the Feast of the Assumption, he began their retreat. The formation of these young men—so many now scattered over the country as priests and bishops—he had looked upon as his life's work. It might be the last time he would have the chance to set his seal upon them. With an especial fervor he preached.

By the end of the month the replies of the bishops in the West had arrived. They were unanimously emphatic in saying that Simon Bruté should accept his appointment to Vincennes. Like a good child he had left the decision to them; now like a boy on fire for adventure, he was consumed with impatience to be gone.

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Sugar Rations in Dakota

By T. D. LYONS

THANKSGIVING DAY of the year the Big Place was hailed out was attended at our dinner table by Pike L'Siou and Olaf Norstrom, the efficient manager of the Redstone Mercantile Establishment. We had two big 30-pound turkeys on the table, well browned, giving forth a fragrant smoke from roasting, and well stuffed with oyster dressing. George Davidson's venture with my father's backing into the turkey business had proved a great success. Within a week after the destructive hail storm, he had gone with six teams and header-boxes to Slim Buttes, in the Black Hills, where a millionaire Chicago commission merchant had established a dude turkey-ranch and hatched out thousands of incubated turkey chicks every month from April to the first of October. George returned with three thousand, and succeeded in raising 2,500 fat turks. We were to begin the next day hauling them in from the Big Place for delivery to Nels Satter, the manager of the Redstone Creamery, who was carrying on a wholesale poultry business on the side. Thanksgiving Day was unusually cold and blustery; it was 22 below by the official C. & N. W. R. R. thermometer which hung outside the depot door, at exactly 12:00 noon, when my father examined it on his way up from the elevator.

Pike L'Siou said that the winter had opened early and that he feared a hard winter such as that of '79, or '76, he couldn't remember the year, precisely. He explained that on the fifth day of January, the railroad companies all discontinued service throughout Dakota Territory, on account of the tremendous snow-drifts which made the running of trains an absolute impossibility. Olaf promptly remarked that in 1876 railroad mileage in Dakota was too inconsiderable to worry about, although he believed there was a line from St. Paul to Bismarck, and a few "streaks of rust" in the Sioux Valley. My father remarked that railroad transportation and equipment had improved marvelously since that time and that the big snow plows of modern make assured open transportation throughout the winter.

The next day, it was still snowing and blowing, and the thermometer registered 31 below zero when my brother and I got in from the Big Place with the second load of turkeys we had hauled that day. My father came out into the street with Olaf in front of the Redstone Mercantile Company and took the teams away from us, ordering us into the store to get warm. When he and Olaf returned to the store, he lighted a cigar with a good deal of deliberation, and said, "Olaf, there might be something to Pike's prognostication of a hard winter. In the event of a tie-up in transportation, what would we have a shortage of?"

Olaf promptly answered, "There are three items which run out first in grocery supplies—chewing tobacco, coffee and sugar. Do you think we had better stock up a little on these?" My father answered, "Yes, double our customary orders next Monday to the wholesalers, and for good measure order two extra hogsheads of blackstrap molasses, and two extra 500-pound casks of brown sugar, the cheapest variety, like we order to feed the horses to put a gloss on their coats." On January 10 we were hauling in the last loads of the turkeys, in very cold weather. Nels Satter warned my father that he could not accept any more turkeys because the Northwestern had declined to permit further shipments on account of the risk of loss of the poultry by freezing. The next day, all Northwestern trains were several hours late, and the Sioux Falls *Press* (which was two days old when received) carried the story that railroad traffic all over Dakota was being blocked by thick snow-drifts in the railroad cuts, and that the ordinary wooden snow-plows were unequal to the emergency. Then there followed a period of absolute isolation, so far as mail and railroad communications were concerned. The telegraph was our sole means of keeping in touch with the outside world.

Olaf's judgment was speedily confirmed; supplies of plug-chewing tobacco were speedily exhausted, and confirmed tobacco "chawers" were reduced to the extremity of chewing Section-Bosses' Delight smoking-tobacco, making a pretense that they were indulging in Piper Heidsick Fine-Cut. Coffee supplies ran low, but by boiling the grounds over two or three times, and falling back on tea and chocolate as a substitute, no real hardship was felt. At the beginning of the sixth week of the snow blockade, Olaf rationed sugar with great sternness and impartiality. My father, after considerable argument, induced him to relax the rule in favor of Mrs. Pooley, the English dressmaker, of Redstone, whose daughter Lib had married Felix Maethvan, a green-horn Welsh miner, who lived in the great Welsh settlement on the Jim River. Felix was unaccustomed to the rigors of the Dakota winter, and he had failed to make proper preparations, especially, according to Mrs. Pooley, since a brand new United States citizen was expected by Lib to arrive before spring. A week later, the blockade situation had grown serious. Every day the sky was grey and overcast. A light snow was constantly falling, and the cutting northwest wind stirred the drifts sufficiently to give a dreary wintry aspect to the view in every direction. The sun was pale and remote, and at dawn was seen accompanied by the sun-dogs, a sure sign of continued cold wintry weather. Mrs. Pooley came in great distress to the Redstone Mercantile Establishment,

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to lay her dilemma before my father, but in his absence was compelled to tell her troubles to the unsympathetic Olaf. Olaf said that Mrs. Pooley had heard, by the celebrated female grape-vine telegraph, that things were almost desperate with Lib and Felix. They had run out of groceries, including sugar and kerosene; they needed medicines, since Felix had contracted the new influenza disease known as "La Grippe." They had no matches in the house, and as their only fuel was twisted hay, they feared that the neighbor boy who was helping them might let the fire go out, and they had no way of rekindling it. Since they lived more than three miles distant from any neighbor, the situation was indeed worrisome. Mrs. Pooley hoped that my father could find some way to send succor and relief. My father looked very grave at Olaf's recital, and remarked to Pike L'Siou that all the roads in that direction were absolutely impassable for teams, according to the expert report of Joe Formanack and Myles Creegan, who had tramped in over the drifts two days before to bring supplies to their community, five miles this side (nearer Redstone) of the Maethvan community. That night, at home, around the hard-coal fire, my father and mother were greatly troubled over the situation, and my mother remarked that my father could surely find some young men who would make the trip a-foot, or a-horseback.

The next morning, early, my father laid the situation before Olaf and Pike L'Siou. Olaf canvassed the list of young men who might be eligible to make the trip, and offered the enormous sum of $5.00 apiece to any two men who would haul a light bob-sled loaded with provisions the 17 miles to Lib's place. Several candidates took up the offer, but by six o'clock that night all had positively declined, for one reason or another.

The next morning my father directed me to hitch Judy to the cutter, as he was driving over to John Windedahl's place, a mile west of Redstone, to confer relative to starting the fanning mill to clean seed wheat. When we reached John Windedahl's place Pike L'Siou, attired in Buffalo coat and cap and German stocks, with rubber Arctics (overshoes), was visible. He had arranged a sort of rope-harness, fastened to a bob-sled, and it was evident that it was made for two men. While my father was in the house talking with Mr. Windedahl, Pike showed me the mysteries of the "diamond hitch." He had fastened four big blanket-loads of groceries and medicine to the bob-sled, "just exactly," he explained, "as he would have tied a pack on a pack mule." When my father reappeared, he was togged out exactly like Pike, in Buffalo coat and cap and Buffalo mittens. He said to me, "Tom, hurry back, so you won't be late for school, and keep your mind on your lessons today. If your Mother asks you anything, you don't have to tell everything you know. Just say that I may not be home at the regular time for supper, and that when you saw me last I was talking about cleaning wheat with Mr. Windedahl." That noon my mother gave us her popular midday meal of tomato soup, made with six cans of whole tomatoes and three quarts of cream. And for dessert she served the famous delicacy of fried-cakes (doughnuts) fresh out of newly rendered ham-fat. She reserved the potatoes and meat ration for the evening meal, saying she knew my father would be hungry.

I kept the secret religiously, although I had great misgivings as I came the half-mile from the schoolhouse at 4:00 o'clock. There was a haze over the sun. The northwest wind was blowing the snow from the tops of the drifts, and the sky looked cheerless in the approaching sun-down. One look at my mother convinced me that she had heard the news, and indeed, Mrs. Pooley had come to thank her with noisy sobs of gratitude, for sending my father to the rescue. At 6:30, John Windedahl drove up with my father in a cutter, attired in his ordinary habit. As he got out of the cutter, he lit a cigar very casually, and made some remark to John Windedahl relative to repairs on the fanning mill, evidently with an idea of covering his trail. My mother gave no sign of anything unusual as we sat down to supper. My father spoke with hearty, explosive enthusiasm of the fine sirloin of cornbeef, flanked by two halves of a big head of boiled cabbage. Then my mother took revenge for the secret. She said, "Why, I don't see how you can have any appetite after eating a big meal at Mrs. Formanack's. What did she have for dinner for you and Pike?" My father pushed back his chair, and said in a very placating tone, "Well now, Sarah, I might have known that poor Mrs. Pooley would have to run to you with the news. I have to plead guilty and admit that I am like the Irishman who was on trial for over-indulgence in brandy. My intentions were better than my judgment." My father then told us of the trip. Pike L'Siou had mapped it out with as much care and military precision as if he were General Custer. They made three miles an hour traveling "as the crow flies," according to Pike's compass. When they completed the 12 miles to Joe Formanack's, Joe insisted on taking my father's place, and he and Pike made the additional 5½ miles to the Maethvan settlement. Lib and her husband were badly in need of care and relief, and Joe Formanack arranged with Myles Creegan to send his nephew, Dick Looby, a competent broncho-buster, to assume command of the entire situation. My mother's only comment was, "You still haven't told us any of the details of Mrs. Formanack's fine dinner." "By George, it was good," said my father. "Spareribs and head-

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cheese, boiled rutabagas, gooseberry pie, and hot coffee—and believe me, I needed a drink of the coffee." That night Olaf called with a long telegram from Will Sterling, at Omaha. Mr. Sterling had been made the General Counsel of the Northwestern, at a salary of $10,000 per year. My father had appealed to him to induce the head officials at Chicago to endeavor to open the Dakota Road.

Mr. Sterling's telegram read as follows:

> Dear Dick: The President of the Northwestern is here; he has bet Marvin Hughitt that he will open the Hawarden-Oakes-Huron branch in time to travel over it and get to St. Paul to drink a whiskey toddy with Marvin and Jim Hill on Washington's Birthday. He is sending our new rotary snow plow, pushed by three mogul engines, and followed by three passenger trains and three freight trains. The President is an old locomotive engineer, and will be at the throttle of the engine which pushes the rotary snow plow. Bet your shirt, and next year's wheat crop, on his bucking the drifts and opening the branch.
>
> Yours truly, and please believe me,
>
> WILL STERLING.

"Well," my father said, "Frank Pettigrew told me that Jim Hill said it took more brains to run a railroad in Dakota than to be President of the United States, and I am beginning to believe he is right."

Views & Reviews

BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

THAT highly observant, shrewd, kindly journalist, Bob Davis, of the New York *Sun,* devoted one of his columns in that newspaper recently (June 13) to some exceptionally interesting comments on the state of the nation. That in itself was an unusual event, for ordinarily his tri-weekly article is devoted to some human interest story or interview, or portrait gathered in his ceaseless traveling; but readers of his column know from experience that even his most casual anecdotes can reveal more about how people live, and what they are thinking about and what their problems are, than the labored editorializing of many other pundits of the press. Be that as it may, none can deny that the four national problems listed by Mr. Davis in the column now being considered are very serious. How they are to be satisfactorily solved is a fifth problem in itself. Writing as one who is "accustomed to continuous travel," and who from the very nature of his calling comes into constant contact with men and women of numerous professions, Mr. Davis has been forced to recognize that "most criticized of our national stupidities are the four archaic systems: (1) The Jury System; (2) Popular Election of Judges; (3) The Electoral College; and (4) divided common law in the United States."

It is the last item on this list of national problems that I find particularly interesting. Concerning it Mr. Davis says that there is at the present time a pronounced demand that the common law should be made universal law in the nation. "Today nine separate states have the civil French law based on the Code Napoleon, by which a taxpayer is permitted to pay a less tax on an equivalent income than a citizen controlled under the common law interpretation." He proceeds with an explanation of this matter, giving illustrations of tax-dodging devices, concluding his remarks by saying that there are many other flaws in this situation that cry aloud for revision. No wonder, then, that there should be a growing demand for the correction of such an unjust situation. But it is another aspect of the common law as developed in the majority of the states of our national union that is recalled by Mr. Davis's article, namely, the fact that we derived our common law from England, and England, in turn, according to the experts in such matters, derived a large, perhaps the predominant, portion of its libertarian and democratic characteristics from the canon law of the Catholic Church. Now as the common law in the great majority of the states supplies the fundamental structure of our American civilization, it would seem that our present alliance with England, in the war, and our probable association with England after the war, in the event of the victory of the United Nations, rests not merely upon momentary, if pressing, reasons, but rather upon a very solid and enduring spiritual kinship.

Richard O'Sullivan, K.C., is the author of a number of essays published a year or two ago in the *Tablet,* of London, which summarized the results of a prolonged and deep study of the influence of the canon law of the Catholic Church upon the English common law. He opened one of his essays with a sentence which some of the bitter-ender critics of England and the English who even today keep up their habit of endless abuse might ponder with some advantage. "To think of England and the United States only in the way in which Herr Goebbels invites us to do, namely, as a pair of pluto-democracies . . . is, at any rate from a legal and political point of view, to miss the whole essence of the matter." What that essence really is, and how it came to be what it is, namely, the basic spirit of personal, corporate, civic and national freedom, is well described in the remainder of Mr. O'Sullivan's essay, and in a number of others that followed the first, and it would be well if these essays were re-printed and widely circulated on our side of the Atlantic. The nub of the matter is, however, well summarized in this passage from Mr. O'Sullivan's learned pen: "Roman law (on which so much of the lives of the population of Europe has been built) . . . in origin and essence is a system of pagan jurisprudence, designed for a community in which religion and the Church were subordinated to the State, and in which a small minority of free citizens lorded it over a large population of slaves. The common law of England is, on the other hand, in origin and essence a Christian system of law, designed for a community in which the Church is independent of, and, at the least, coordinate with, the State, and in which (though the facts did not, at the beginning, entirely fit it) the theory is that every man is by native right a free man."

It is to be hoped that some qualified student of the sub-

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ject in the United States may follow the trail blazed by Mr. O'Sullivan in England and will give us a study of the adoption and growth and development under American conditions of the fundamental Christian institution of the English common law.

Communications

JUSTICE TO OUR ALLIES

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: The article in THE COMMONWEAL of June 5, "Justice to Our Allies," by Harry Paxton Howard, is today a piece of literature of outstanding importance. It is so admirable that I wish it might be published in pamphlet form and given wide distribution. Sumner Welles has said, "Discrimination between peoples, because of their race, creed or color must be abolished." Know yourself, America, and reform your unjust laws! ALICE E. WARREN.

Chicago, Ill.

TO the Editors: Bravo for your editorial on the "Tolan Report" (June 5). That needed to be said and you said it well. Many of us are much disturbed by this treatment of our fellow citizens. I must not omit mention of the timely and urgent article in the same issue by H. P. Howard, "Justice to Our Allies."

JAMES M. YARD,
The Chicago Round Table of the National Conference of Christians and Jews.

The Screen

There'll Always Be

THERE have been many, and there will be many more, movies about the present world conflict. But few of them will or can surpass *"Mrs. Miniver"* as a film about people caught in total war. "Mrs. Miniver" is concerned with the little things that make the big things in war. It has been expertly directed by William Wyler to emphasize these minutiae. Not that death and air raids and Dunkirk are little things at all; but the picture is mainly about how these great events affected the everyday lives of an upper-middle class family in the trying days of '39 and '40. The well-written script (more suggested by than based upon the stories of Jan Struther) shows the English fighting desperately for their way of life. These people are typified in this case by the Miniver family, and especially by Mrs. Miniver, a charming person who is delighted when a rose is named after her—a rose of great beauty that is the result of breeding, budding and horse manure. Before Poland, Mr. and Mrs. Miniver are impractically twitting each other about a new hat and a new car; or they are enjoying their son, Vin, just down from Oxford, who has freshly discovered social consciousness. They are happy in his happiness when he falls in love. But on that Sunday when their minister announces "our country is in war," life takes on a new meaning. Vin enlists. There are air raids. Mr. Miniver aids the rescue work at Dunkirk. Mrs. Miniver captures a German. Vin gets married. In their shelter the Minivers read "Alice" to their two younger children as bombs fall. "Mrs. Miniver Rose" wins a prize. The war is cruel to the Minivers; but in this war the Minivers are also the fighters. Producer Sidney Franklin's film portrays the Minivers with loving care and sentimentality. The photography and production throughout are excellent. The entire cast respond to Wyler's direction and the effect is one of great beauty—albeit tear-drenched beauty. Greer Garson is startlingly lovely as Mrs. Miniver, and Walter Pidgeon is firm, warm, likeable as her husband. Teresa Wright and Richard Ney play the romantic young couple with haunting sensitivity. They are all well contrasted by May Whitty who is the grand dame in her best manner. Like "This Above All," "Mrs. Miniver" shows the English hurrying to make up for their past sins of caste. Through misty eyes we see why England survived and why there'll always be roses and Mrs. Minivers.

It might be well to look at how our allies are handling war films. From Russia comes *"Guerilla Brigade,"* a picture made shortly before Hitler's army marched into U.S.S.R., but only recently released in this country with English titles. While it depicts the guerilla fighters in the last war and while the film's technique cannot compare with our finished products, "Guerilla Brigade" has a sincerity of purpose and a timelessness that puts many of our more advanced pictures to shame. It shows the Russians first welcoming the Germans, the Germans marching into the Ukraine, the workmen and peasants banding together to form guerilla brigades and drive out their common foe. In spite of the better German equipment and training, these Ukrainians with guns, sticks and scythes harass the enemy behind their lines and are victorious because they are fighting for their own land, their homes, their families without thought of surrender. Although the film's acting is somewhat naive, this is more than made up for in rugged honesty. It too has humor. When the German generals surrender, they finally see the Russian leaders—a peasant, a miner, a sailor. Wonderful to behold are the amazed and crestfallen expressions on the faces of the Germans.

From England have recently come two war films. *"Suicide Squadron"* is notable for for the fine performance of Anton Walbrook (as a Polish pianist, composer, flier) and the good music which the film uses as his compositions. In spite of a certain theatrical quality to the story (about the Pole who is considered more valuable to his country for his concerts in the United States than for his fighting with the air force), the film moves with a sweeping emotion that leaves an impact on the audience. The sad scenes of bombed Poland, the excellent sequences of Poles in the RAF fighting German planes are very real. Unfortunately the film gets tangled when the hero falls for and marries an American reporter. Director Brian Desmond Hurst concentrate a little too heavily on Sally Gray and shows us too many close-ups of her. However, Mr. Walbrook manages to convey the serious war mood;

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the sincerity of his portrayal is impressive even when the story gets choked with sentiment.

Leslie Banks and John Clements lead the English cast in *"Ships With Wings"* but they are unable to keep the film from sinking in its own stodginess. The script is stuffy; and all the exciting shots of planes taking off from the deck of H.M.S. *Ark Royal* cannot insert a ring of reality into it. Hollywood has done these fighter plane pictures so much better and so much more beautifully that this English attempt becomes a weak imitation. Somehow English reserve never seems appropriate to war time; when one of the characters says, "We're off to have a smack at Mr. Hitler," you wonder what good this "smack" will do. You also wonder if the vice-admiral portrayed by Banks isn't one of the smug, inefficient aristocrats that caused the hero of "This Above All" to desert.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Books of the Week

Russia's Secret

Behind the Urals. John Scott. Houghton. $2.75.

WHAT accounts for Russia's resistance against the most powerful striking intrument ever devised by man? It is no easy thing even to attempt an answer to that question, and the probability is that no living person could fathom the whole truth. Even the historians of the future will doubtless err in their appraisals. Yet granting the impossibility of any global analysis of the matter, certain specific factors now begin to become visible, with which one can attempt a very rough sketch. John Scott's book discusses most of them.

"Behind the Urals" is indeed a queer production. It is sloppily written and worse edited. Words are left out of sentences; statistics are obviously misprinted. One gets the impression of a man dictating off-hand and never bothering to revise what his secretary types from her notes. There is a monotony in the sentence structure, a carelessness in the use of words which are likely to make readers find the book repellent, even though they themselves do not quite know why. Yet in spite of all this, "Behind the Urals" should be read by anyone seeking enlightenment on the Russian enigma.

John Scott is the son of a distinguished father, Scott Nearing, who will be remembered by a generation of Americans for his teaching and writing. The son tells us himself that after leaving the University of Wisconsin in 1931 he found himself footloose with very little hope of obtaining employment. "Something seemed to be wrong with America. I began to read extensively about the Soviet Union, and gradually came to the conclusion that the Bolsheviks had found answers to at least some of the questions Americans were asking each other. I decided to go to Russia to work, study, and to lend a hand in the construction of a society which seemed to be at least one step ahead of the American." So he learned to be a welder, got his certificate and union card and went to Berlin to get a Soviet visa.

In Russia Scott was employed at Magnitogorsk in September, 1932. His final return to the United States was in 1941. For nine years, with a few months out for visits home, he lived and worked in the Soviet Union. "Behind the Urals" is an account of what he saw and did. At first he worked at the trade he had learned before going; then he became a chemist in a coke and chemical by-products plant. Meanwhile he married a Russian girl and started a family. The last few years of his sojourn were spent as a newspaper correspondent in Moscow, while he waited for papers permitting his wife and children to come to America with him.

Like so many others of the sort, Scott's book suffers from being both a personal narrative and a sociological and economic analysis of Russia. Thus it falls between two stools. Many of its chapters will please those who like autobiography and displease those who want "scientific" facts and figures; other chapters will bore many readers while serving as valuable matter for the serious student. But from it all there emerges a picture which is fairly convincing if not fully developed and which, although containing little that is new, does seem to fit the historical facts.

Magnitogorsk is in a way a symbol of the strength of a collectivist economy under the iron hand of an all-powerful government. For many decades its iron deposits had been known and scratched at, but on a very mediocre scale. It was miles from nowhere. Railroad facilities were non-existent. The climate was something beyond belief—months of incredible cold and a short summer of incredible heat. There was no surrounding agriculture to feed a large concentration of population. Yet this region east of the Urals and two thousand miles from any frontier is handsomely endowed with mineral wealth; its iron ore is as rich as any in the world, and there is a great supply of it. Stalin decided that, whatever the cost, this region must be developed and developed quickly. "Stalin was probably one of the few men in the Soviet Union who realized how catastrophically expensive it was going to be. But he was convinced that it was just a matter of time until the Soviet Union would again be invaded by hostile capitalist powers seeking to dismember and destroy the first Socialist State. Stalin considered it his sacred obligation to see to it that when the time came the attackers would not be able to accomplish this. The fulfillment of this task justified all means."

In that last sentence lies the key to Soviet (and also to nazi) power. If to such an end you apply any and all means, and the end is not in itself impossible of achievement, you are likely to end with success. In 1928 the first serious work was done to set in motion the great industrial development beyond the Urals. Nine years later Magnitogorsk had become a city of the size of New Haven or Hartford and was producing a million four hundred thousand tons of iron and steel a year, as well as a respectable amount of coke and by-products. But to do this, human life and pain had to be forgotten; workmen were killed by the score and suffered horrible injuries by the thousands; for years no one had enough to eat or wear while the iron and steel plants were ruthlessly pushed to completion, to production. No consideration could be allowed to interfere with the one grand object—the prevention of any threat to the world's one socialist State. (Some would probably prefer to phrase it differently, and say that everything was done to preserve Stalin's powers.)

Thus when there was a desperate need for the goods produced by light industry—clothes, shoes, furniture, cooking utensils—the government insisted that the real

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emphasis be placed on heavy industry—the industry that counted most in preparation for war. The people could go without; they could put up with a low standard of living. The purges were obviously conducted on the principle that it was worth while sacrificing thousands if in the process one eliminated a few score of those who were really guilty of plotting against the state. And one could afford to be thus careless of human life because the land swarmed with people. Man-power is the most plentiful and cheap of all Russia's vast resources. What does it matter if a few thousands or even millions die in the course of putting a policy into effect? The only criterion is—does a given action strengthen Russia? Perhaps such a social organism—ruthless, "realistic" to the point of horror, willing to make any sacrifice to maintain its own power—was the only sort of organism capable of blunting the edge of a similar nazi power. Indeed one can find little difference between the two leading exponents of ant-hill life except that the nazi socialism is disfigured by a sadism and an envy and an expansionism of which Soviet socialism has given no evidence.

HARRY LORIN BINSSE.

FICTION

Immortal Sergeant. John Brophy. Harper. $2.50

ONE can hardly predict at this time the effects of the local color aspects of three dimensional total war upon regional literature. The world-wide geographical placements of AEF's and BEF's will undoubtedly offer serious material for romantic and realistic novelist alike.

The British Lybian Desert campaign is the locale of John Brophy's "Immortal Sergeant," a locale with which he has been familiar ever since the days of his work in Cairo with the Egyptian Civil Service. The locale, however, is subordinate to a narrative in which are displayed those elementary feelings common to men whose ships sink, whose guns are destroyed, who are left exposed to elementary natural forces. Sergeant Kelly's platoon of fourteen men, driving two trucks and a Bren carrier, set out on the desert towards Agedabia on a reconnaisance patrol to observe the possible movement of the "Eyeties" (Italians). "Eyetie" dive-bombers destroy the mobile units and Corporal Colin Spence says laconically, "As a mechanized army, we're finished." Sergeant Kelly is a World War I left-over, "middle-aged, old-fashioned in outlook, foul-mouthed in an out-moded way, uneducated, uncouth, bred in slums and toughened in barracks, camps and trenches. . . ." Mortally wounded in an attack on a stalled enemy tank, Kelly dies "like a gentleman," a suicide, so as not to burden the four surviving members of the patrol. Command falls to Corporal Spence, a mildly successful London author, turned soldier. Spence was of "the London intelligentsia of the better sort" but lacking in the determination and responsibility to lead the remnants of the tattered platoon to base camp. The personality of the deceased sergeant persists. "Kelly would have known the right answer. Think of Kelly long enough and the answer will come." Gradually Spence is imbued with the sergeant's logic; he acts as the sergeant would act under the trials of thirst, hunger, acts as the sergeant would act against superior enemy forces in possession of an oasis. Should they give themselves up to the enemy, die in the desert or die fighting?

Under the stress Spence grows in character. His resolution and directness help to solve his love problem with Valentine Finch who, though not present in the story as an actual character, is present in the musings of young Spence. Cleverly interwoven with the narrative of adventure, the love story unfolds simply against the background of London intellectuals who discuss Marxism, the New Order and Chamberlain with equal facility. There is a glimpse of the cultural debunkers, the left-wingers, the pseudo-philosophers as characterized in Benedictus, of whom more could have been written. Mr. Brophy indicates through Colin's consciousness that he knows much of the England between Munich and Dunkirk that would bear telling. In fairness to the "Immortal Sergeant" it should be said that the character of Kelly predominates; other matters are subordinate.

Nor can one overlook the treatment of Colin's love for Valentine. Here is one novel, a war novel at that, in which a bathing party is not a prelude to seduction, sensationalism or sadism; in which soldiers have been made real without their invocation of all the epithets of the back-fence school of fiction. Restraint, taste, dynamic narrative prevail. This is not a great novel, but it is a dramatic story of men and the desert. The men are real and the desert is real.

JAMES P. WALSH.

And Now Tomorrow. Rachel Field. Macmillan. $2.75.

THE SCENE is one of those Massachusetts milltowns where one family used to own the mill and play Providence to most of the townspeople. The characters are not unusual, neither is the story. The plot is as obvious as Little Red Riding Hood, but one listens to it because Miss Field has told it so well.

"Always do what's expected of you," was the advice of Emily's father, who did just the contrary when he married a beautiful young Polack in the mill and went to paint in Paris instead of joining his family in the management of the Peace Pipe Cotton Co. Blairstown was sharply divided by the river which cut a social swathe through it between capital and labor. Emily Blair liked to think that through her mother she lived on both sides of the bridge and enjoyed the savor of democracy when she attended High School across the river. She could even understand the growing resentment toward the Blairs' "charities," but when it came to taking any action about the strike for recognition of the union, Emily's sympathy proved to be nine-tenths sentimental. There was no question of her following her father's example with Jo Kelly, the gardener's son who became one of the strike leaders. Jo is the story's real tragedy. He was shot by the strikers when he placed himself under suspicion by stealing one night into the Blairs' cellar to help his father with the furnace.

The story is told by Emily and a great deal of drama seems lost by not letting the reader be as shocked as Emily when Harry Collins jilts her. But perhaps no reader can be as dense as a heroine. Of course Emily is deaf, but she's not at all blind—except about Harry—and she becomes very proficient in lip reading. It seems a pity with this excellent opportunity for some rather unexplored psychology that Miss Field hurries over the first year of Emily's sudden affliction. Miss Field's New England lives in the atmosphere she evokes—a warmer one than Marquand's—her characters are drawn as types and not with the uncanny, photographic detail of "H. H. Pulham Esq." Her last story leaves one saddened at the loss of an author who had so endearing a quality of sympathy and so very sure a gift for narrative.

E. V. R. WYATT.

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HISTORY

Victorian Prelude. Maurice J. Quinlan. Columbia. $3.00.

IN "The Letters of Queen Victoria" the Queen, already a wife and mother, inquires from her uncle, King Leopold, whether it would be proper for her to read "The Three Musketeers." Dr. Quinlan's main task has been to explore the origins of such almost incredible prudery. A book on this subject might easily have been dull and trite; but those adjectives are among the very last which could properly be applied to Dr. Quinlan's monograph. Toward the end it does seem to lag a bit, as though there had not been quite time enough for those last revisions on which tempo so much depends; but the body of the book is fresh, engrossing and finely written. For the Victorians, with all their traditionalism and their cant, with all their tendency to find the highest virtues in qualities which made conveniently for business success, did stand for character. Although the revival in religion, morals and humanitarianism which took place during the half century or so preceding the famous early morning scene at Kensington Palace has not been too well sustained, there can be little doubt that England is the better for it even today.

Some of the most important source materials for this revival lay buried deep in masses of periodical and pamphlet literature, inaccessible except in English libraries, and utilizable only through sheer drudgery. Dr. Quinlan has not only discovered and quarried them, but has sorted out the most significant and introduced them into an engaging narrative, lighted constantly by insight and dry humor. He is, for example, quick to appreciate a point made by Sydney Smith—that anti-feminists who, in the name of modesty and piety, implored women to emphasize their feminity, were unconsciously advocating the constant use of "sex appeal." Without such touches the story of pre-Victorian puritanism's triumph over unashamed coarseness, callousness and laxity would be rather grim. But Dr. Quinlan's contributions to knowledge go far beyond this tale. He corrects the common belief that the efforts of eighteenth century societies to elevate the underprivileged through education were virtually useless; he shows how the manners and morals of the thriving manufacturers (rather ill at ease in their new affluence) came to be formed by Methodists or near Methodists; and he throws a great deal of new light on the alliance made between conservatism and religion for combating the influence on the English masses of the Jacobins and Tom Paine. The enlistment of popular pamphleteers and ballad writers was a shrewd stroke. The book, then, penetrates deeply, yet reaches far. Perhaps some elements in the picture have received less than their due weight—for example, the influence of Hogarth. And naturally one can find occasional statements or points of view with which to disagree. But what of it? This book is the work of a real scholar who writes of deep and strong currents in a nation's life, and yet manages constantly to entertain us as we go along with him.

H. C. F. BELL.

MISCELLANEOUS

A New Dictionary of Quotations. Selected and Edited by H. L. Mencken. Knopf. $7.50.

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detective novel, as diverting as the *New Yorker*: the temptation to browse night after night, is irresistible.

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Special features are the elimination of an index in favor of many more and preciser rubrics, liberally cross-referenced; a strictly chronological arrangement within the rubrics; fewer platitudes but more popular proverbs of genuine wit or wisdom. Relatively few living authors are included, "for not many of them save the politicians have said anything worth remembering," but Americans are far more widely represented than in other collections. And there's a considerably larger proportion of prose to verse. It goes without saying that skeptics are given more space than the orthodox.

Here are a few random samples:

> The mobs of great cities add just so much to the support of pure government as sores do to the strength of the human body.—Thomas Jefferson, "Notes on Virginia," 1782.
>
> The devil of the negro is white.—Bulgarian proverb.
>
> High deeds, O Germans, are to come from you—William Wordsworth, "A Prophecy," 1807.
>
> Never ask people where they are from. If they are from Virginia, they will tell you so; if not, it will embarrass them to have to confess that they aren't.—Author unidentified.
>
> Whoever takes it upon himself to establish a commonwealth and prescribe laws must presuppose all men naturally bad, and that they will yield to their innate evil passions as often as they can do so with safety.—Niccolo Macchiavelli, "Discorsi," 1531.
>
> A louse in the cabbage is better than no meat at all.—Pennsylvania German proverb.
>
> None preaches better than the ant, and she says nothing. —Benjamin Franklin, "Poor Richard's Almanac," 1736.
>
> The Christian concept of a god—the god as the patron of the sick, the god as a spinner of cobwebs, the god as a spirit—is one of the most corrupt concepts that has ever been set up in the world: it probably touches low-water mark in the ebbing evolution of the god-type.—F. W. Nietzsche, "The Antichrist," 1888.
>
> We have a more certain knowledge of the existence of God than of anything our senses have not immediately discovered to us. Nay, I presume I may say that we more certainly know that there is a God than there is anything else without us.—John Locke, "Essay Concerning Human Understanding," 1690.

DAVID BURNHAM.

PHILOSOPHY

Is Modern Culture Doomed? Andrew J. Krzesinski. Devin-Adair. $2.00.

THIS superficial little volume is not really a study of modern culture at all. It is really an attack on the materialism of our age. However after reading Berdyaev and Dawson, these pages seem actually puerile. The author attempts to divorce modern culture from Christian culture, but can we really be so smug about the condition of the culture we call Christian? Are we Christians also not members of our age and have we no responsibility at all for some of its sins?

It is difficult to understand how anyone can write on the fate of modern culture without a thorough knowledge of Spengler and of Toynbee. The author cites Spengler but is apparently unfamiliar with Spengler's later work, "Die Jahre der Entscheidung," which modifies the view cited concerning salvation coming from the East. Toynbee is not even referred to. Yet his volumes are unquestionably the most searching studies of the fate of our world which have yet appeared.

A layman is scarcely competent to question the theology of this volume. Yet it seems strange that the book bears no *imprimatur*. Canon law requires the *imprimatur* on a book written by a priest. And is it really good theology to conclude a superficial analysis with the optimistic statement: "Evil, in whatever form it may appear, must serve sooner or later as a tool for good"? This simply begs the whole question of the fate of our civilization. It is surely fallacious to assume that the crash of our materialistic world will automatically pave the way for the victory of Christian culture.

WALTER JOHN MARX.

Marriage. Dietrich von Hildebrand. Longmans. $1.25.

THEOLOGIANS of today are revising their theories of marriage in the direction of a more spiritual and personal interpretation of its meaning and purpose. Marriage is viewed more as a community of love and a mutual complementation of the partners while the relation to procreation is less emphasized though, of course, not excluded. In this revaluation, Dr. von Hildebrand has played a leading part. The present volume, conceived in the new spirit, shadows forth a noble and inspiring concept of marriage, which remains unaffected whether the author's approach and construction are accepted or not.

To harmonize the new presentation with the traditional doctrine a distinction is made between the primary meaning and the primary end of marriage. This distinction seems to be of questionable validity because a society receives its meaning, nature or essence from the end. Marriage cannot be fully understood apart from procreation for if it is true that the characteristic differences of man and woman are complementary, destined to be merged in a higher unity, this differentiation itself is based on the fact of sex the primary meaning of which is none other than procreation. No theologian will deny that a conjugal union to which offspring has been refused can be spiritually fruitful in many ways but the couple itself deplores childlessness as a misfortune.

All the fine values like mutual complementation, surrender of self, intimate companionship, communion of love, symbolic representation of the union of Christ and His Church, which the newer view stresses and justly exalts, can be, and have been, fitted into the old scheme which speaks of the primary and secondary ends of marriage. Still, if the new way of putting the matter appeals more strongly to the modern mind there is no reason to object since apparently no doctrinal point is at stake.

C. BRUEHL.

RELIGION

Seeking For Trouble. Margaret T. Monro. Longmans. $1.75.

HERE is an effort to explain in popular fashion the social values of asceticism, and to point the way, in these days of air raids, rationing and other hardships, to a philosophy "which holds in honor going without rather than getting." The British author believes that the

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ascetics "show us how to handle our troubles constructively." Had she culled and arranged all of her startlingly sane statements on asceticism, she would have made out a more convincing case; but her brilliant aphorisms fall pall-mall through chapters that are obvious attempts to write in a manner that will take with the man in the street, a manner evidently foreign to her. Her very title, "Seeking for Trouble," is too frivolous for the volume's contents, as are the chapter headings, "Trouble Number One: Virginity"; Trouble Number Two: Martyrdom"; etc. When she endeavors to illustrate the worth of each "trouble" by re-telling, not very felicitously, the story of an early saint in the hope that "if we can understand the impact of Christianity upon the ancient world, we may recover the power to make a similar impact upon the neo-paganism of today," we wish that the author had the power to write.

But note her gift for succinct sentences: "An ascetic then is one who, for some sound personal reason, such as a personal call from God, adopts a stiff standard for himself. A rigorist is one who, without adequate reasons of any kind, tries to force a strict standard upon everybody." Again, "Asceticism is the constant witness to the truth that human life only goes right if it is kept pointed toward God." Writing of virginity as practiced by the early Christians, she says that it "played the decisive part in establishing the eternal destiny of the woman equally with that of the man." Again, in considering poverty, she calls attention to the cycle that asceticism has followed: "It began as purely amateur, then for centuries was almost purely professional. But for a considerable period now there has been something like a return to the community, a restoration to everyday life of what the professionals have earned in the period of separateness."

The book is thoughtful, earnest and unusual; it lacks the form that makes for true art of any kind, but it bears the *imprimatur* of the Westminster censor, and the reader can not put it down without pondering much that it suggests. There is nothing to cavil at in its directness: "The whole atmosphere of Europe is poisoned with unrepented sin, of which the bomb is a mere symptom." Savonarola might have said that. D. H. MOSELEY.

BRIEFERS

The Sea-Gull Cry. Robert Nathan. Knopf. $2.00.

IN CHARACTERISTIC, limpid style, Robert Nathan's new novel tells the story of two war refugees from Poland, nineteen-year-old Louisa and her small brother, who find new life at Cape Cod with the help of a middle-aged college professor, a kindly Yankee couple and a delightful little girl named Meg. No successor to "Portrait of Jennie," but Nathan admirers will enjoy his endearing children and New Englanders. For readers who want to slip into something light for the summer.

Raphael. Oxford University Press. $4.50.

DESPITE the war, England's Phaidon Editions of large-scale art reproductions continue to top their field. The new Raphael volume is unusually generous with color and pen-and-ink studies. Those who find the Urbino Master's touted Madonnas smugly over-prettified must bow to the majestic compositions and superbly-integrated baroque action of the VaVtican frescoes and tapestry cartoons. W. E. Suida's short introduction supplies an adequate biographical and historical reference.

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Medical Mission Sisters

DR. AGNES McLAREN, a native of Scotland, in 1897 became a convert from Presbyterianism at the age of sixty; she was seventy-two when she decided to go to India to find out at first-hand about the need for women doctors and nurses there. She founded a hospital for women and children at Rawalpindi in North India, a territory where Mohammedanism and seclusion of women were dominant. The place was also under the jurisdiction of Prefect Apostolic Dominic Wagner, who had written Dr. McLaren several years before that "during my twenty-six years in the north of India, I have never seen the face of a Mohammedan woman."

The first volunteer for this medical apostolate of women doctors and trained nurses for the missions was Miss Anna Dengel from the Austrian Tyrol. Because of the interest of Sir Bertram Windle, president of the institution, she took her medical degree at the University College of Cork. In 1920 Dr. Dengel set out for India to take charge of the Rawalpindi hospital. Four years later she came to America to plead the cause of the medical missions. Here she encountered Father Michael A. Mathis, C.S.C., superior of the Foreign Missionary Seminary of the Holy Cross in Washington, D. C., and a year later, deeply convinced by the same need, in collaboration they established the Society of Catholic Medical Missionaries, which is the subject of an article by Francis P. Goodall, C.S.C., in the *Ecclesiastical Review*.

Two years later the Society's Holy Family Hospital was established in Rawalpindi and by 1940 it was caring for 1,530 in-patients and 32,181 out-patients annually; in addition 593 operations were performed and 303 babies were born in the hospital that same year. The Holy Family Hospital is the only Catholic hospital in the Punjab.

In the Diocese of Dacca, Bengal, the Society has in ten years succeeded in reducing infant mortality by one-third in the areas under their supervision. In addition to doctors and nurses the sixty-eight professed Sisters today include dieticians, pharmacists, social workers, technologists and office and household workers. In 1932 the Society established a Postulate in London, in 1939 a Novitiate in Heerlen, South Holland, and in 1940 a daughter community in India itself.

CONTRIBUTORS

Barry BYRNE has long interested himself in problems of housing and was one of the first architects to become an expert on the subject in this country. His own practice has been divided between work for the Church and private residences.
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